

I CLAIM:

1. A method distributing a computer program product, said method comprising the steps of:
 - 5 obtaining a licence ticket bearing a licence key;
inputting at a user computer a download source computer address of a download source computer of a supplier of said computer program product;
establishing a computer network connection between said user computer and said download source computer;
 - 10 inputting said licence key at said user computer;
transmitting said licence key from said user computer to said download source computer via said computer network connection;
validating said licence key sent to said download source computer; and
if said licence key is valid, then:
 - 15 (i) downloading said computer program product to said user computer;
and
(ii) installing said computer program product to be resident upon said user computer.
- 20 2. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said licence ticket is obtained via a purchase by a user.
3. A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein when said licence ticket is purchased a seller of said licence ticket transmits data indicating sale of said licence ticket to said
25 supplier of said computer program product.
4. A method as claimed in claim 3, wherein receipt of said data indicating sale of said licence ticket validates said licence key associated with said licence ticket such upon subsequent receipt of said licence key at said download source computer said
30 licence key will be treated as valid.
5. A method as claimed in claim 3, wherein said data indicating sale of said licence ticket indicates one or more computer program products of which download and installation is to be allowed by said licence key of said licence ticket.

6. A method as claimed in claim 3, wherein receipt of said data indicating sale of said licence ticket triggers said supplier of said computer program product to charge said seller for a licence to use said computer program product.

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7. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein if said licence key is valid, then a user account is created associated with said licence key.

8. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said licence key is hidden upon said licence ticket so as to be non-reversibly revealable by said user.

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9. A method as claimed in claim 8, wherein said licence key is hidden behind a scratch off covering upon said licence ticket.

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10. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said licence ticket bears a licence ticket identifier used to identify licence tickets released to be available to be obtained by a user.

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11. A method installing a computer program product, said method comprising the steps of:

obtaining a licence ticket bearing a licence key;

inputting at a user computer a download source computer address of a download source computer of a supplier of said computer program product;

25 establishing a computer network connection between said user computer and said download source computer;

inputting said licence key at said user computer;

transmitting said licence key from said user computer to said download source computer via said computer network connection; and

if said licence key is valid, then:

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(i) downloading said computer program product to said user computer;

and

(ii) installing said computer program product to be resident upon said user computer.

12. A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein said licence ticket is obtained via a purchase by a user.

13. A method as claimed in claim 12, wherein when said licence ticket is purchased a seller of said licence ticket transmits data indicating sale of said licence ticket to said supplier of said computer program product.

14. A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein receipt of said data indicating sale of said licence ticket validates said licence key associated with said licence ticket such upon subsequent receipt of said licence key at said download source computer said licence key will be treated as valid.

15. A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein said data indicating sale of said licence ticket indicates one or more computer program products of which download and installation is to be allowed by said licence key of said licence ticket.

16. A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein receipt of said data indicating sale of said licence ticket triggers said supplier of said computer program product to charge said seller for a licence to use said computer program product.

17. A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein if said licence key is valid, then a user account is created associated with said licence key.

18. A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein said licence key is hidden upon said licence ticket so as to be non-reversibly revealable by said user.

19. A method as claimed in claim 18, wherein said licence key is hidden behind a scratch off covering upon said licence ticket.

20. A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein said licence ticket bears a licence ticket identifier used to identify licence tickets released to be available to be obtained by a user.

21. A method supplying a computer program product, said method comprising the steps of:

in response to a connection request from a user computer, establishing a computer network connection between said user computer and a download source.

5 computer;

receiving a licence key input by a user at said user computer, said licence key being borne by a licence ticket obtained by a user;

validating said licence key sent to said download source computer; and

10 if said licence key is valid, then downloading said computer program product to said user computer for installation to be resident upon said user computer.

22. A method as claimed in claim 21, wherein said licence ticket is obtained via a purchase by a user.

15 23. A method as claimed in claim 22, wherein when said licence ticket is purchased a seller of said licence ticket transmits data indicating sale of said licence ticket to said supplier of said computer program product.

24. A method as claimed in claim 23, wherein receipt of said data indicating sale of said licence ticket validates said licence key associated with said licence ticket such
20 upon subsequent receipt of said licence key at said download source computer said licence key will be treated as valid.

25. A method as claimed in claim 23, wherein said data indicating sale of said
25 licence ticket indicates one or more computer program products of which download and installation is to be allowed by said licence key of said licence ticket.

26. A method as claimed in claim 23, wherein receipt of said data indicating sale of said licence ticket triggers said supplier of said computer program product to
30 charge said seller for a licence to use said computer program product.

27. A method as claimed in claim 21, wherein if said licence key is valid, then a user account is created associated with said licence key.

28. A method as claimed in claim 21, wherein said licence key is hidden upon said licence ticket so as to be non-reversibly revealable by said user.

29. A method as claimed in claim 28, wherein said licence key is hidden behind a scratch off covering upon said licence ticket.

30. A method as claimed in claim 21, wherein said licence ticket bears a licence ticket identifier used to identify licence tickets released to be available to be obtained by a user.

31. A software supply controlling computer program operable to control a download source computer to supply a computer program product to a user computer, said software supply controlling computer program comprising:

connection establishing code operable in response to a connection request from a user computer to establish a computer network connection between said user computer and said download source computer;

licence key receiving code operable to receive a licence key input by a user at said user computer, said licence key being borne by a licence ticket obtained by a user;

licence key validating code operable to validate said licence key sent to said download source computer; and

downloading code operable if said licence key is valid to download said computer program product to said user computer for installation to be resident upon said user computer.

32. A software supply controlling computer program as claimed in claim 31, wherein said licence ticket is obtained via a purchase by a user.

33. A software supply controlling computer program as claimed in claim 32, wherein when said licence ticket is purchased a seller of said licence ticket transmits data indicating sale of said licence ticket to said supplier of said computer program product.

34. A software supply controlling computer program as claimed in claim 33, wherein receipt of said data indicating sale of said licence ticket validates said licence key associated with said licence ticket such upon subsequent receipt of said licence key at said download source computer said licence key will be treated as valid.

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35. A software supply controlling computer program as claimed in claim 33, wherein said data indicating sale of said licence ticket indicates one or more computer program products of which download and installation is to be allowed by said licence key of said licence ticket.

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36. A software supply controlling computer program as claimed in claim 33, wherein receipt of said data indicating sale of said licence ticket triggers said supplier of said computer program product to charge said seller for a licence to use said computer program product.

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37. A software supply controlling computer program as claimed in claim 31, wherein if said licence key is valid, then a user account is created associated with said licence key.

20 38. A software supply controlling computer program as claimed in claim 31, wherein said licence key is hidden upon said licence ticket so as to be non-reversibly revealable by said user.

25 39. A software supply controlling computer program as claimed in claim 38, wherein said licence key is hidden behind a scratch off covering upon said licence ticket.

30 40. A software supply controlling computer program as claimed in claim 31, wherein said licence ticket bears a licence ticket identifier used to identify licence tickets released to be available to be obtained by a user.